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Northern Developments

The Newsletter of the Northern Alberta Development Council

Alberta-Northwest Territories Memorandum of Understanding Agreement Extended for Another Five Years

On October 17, 2003, Premier Ralph Klein of the Province of Alberta and Premier Stephen Kakfwi of the Northwest Territories signed a five-year extension to the *Alberta-Northwest Territories Memorandum of Understanding For Cooperation and Development* in Calgary. In a news release, Premier Klein said, "I am very pleased with this extension, as it will continue to provide a useful mechanism to promote cooperation between Alberta and the Northwest Territories. It strengthens our relationship as we continue to concentrate our efforts in areas of interest common to both of us."

The Memorandum of Understanding was originally signed by Alberta and the Northwest Territories in October 1998. This recent signing represents a five-year extension to the agreement that will carry it to October 2008.

Gary Friedel, Chair, Northern Alberta Development Council and the MLA for Peace River, represented the Council at the signing ceremony.

Mr. Friedel noted that there have been numerous accomplishments associated with the Memorandum of Understanding. "We have been able to undertake projects on a cooperative basis with the Northwest Territories that have a significant

connection to the development of Northern Alberta. These include: mutual work on air, rail and road transportation; support for the Deh Cho Travel Connection and other tourism initiatives of interest to both jurisdictions; having Aurora College become a member of the Alberta North post-secondary education consortium; and the sharing of information related to the economic impacts of development. These and other initiatives have highlighted the benefits of Northern Alberta working with the Northwest Territories."

The Honourable Pearl Calahasen, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, is the Alberta Co-Chair for the Memorandum of Understanding, while the Honourable Vince Steen, Minister of Municipal and Community Affairs, is the Northwest Territories Co-Chair.

The Northern Alberta Development Council is the Alberta Secretariat for this Memorandum of Understanding.

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Check out the NADC Web site at
www3.gov.ab.ca/nadc for information on upcoming events, recent publications, reports and information on the NADC Bursary and Northern LINKS



Photo information (left to right, front row)
The Honourable Ralph Klein, Premier of Alberta
The Honourable Stephen Kakfwi, Premier of the Northwest Territories
(left to right, back row)
Gary Friedel, MLA for Peace River, Chair, Northern Alberta Development Council
The Honourable Lyle Oberg, Minister of Learning, Alberta
The Honourable Jake Ootes, Minister of Education, Cultural and Employment, Northwest Territories

Challenge NORTH 2003: Opportunities – Strategies – Success

We need to develop strategies to maximize our many northern opportunities, and turn them into enhanced economy and quality of life.

- Gary Friedel,

Chair, Northern Alberta Development Council
M.L.A. for Peace River

These opening remarks by Gary Friedel launched the Challenge NORTH 2003 Conference in Fort McMurray on April 9, 2003. The three day conference, an event held by the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) every three years, provided a chance for the NADC to meet with leaders from the private and public sectors to discuss northern issues and to build on the significant progress that has been made in Northern Alberta in past years.

The list of speakers was impressive and included leaders of industry, government, northern communities and service providers from Alberta, British Columbia, Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Northwest Territories. They spoke on a wide range of topics including the future of the North, trends, barriers and challenges to northern development, northern rail transportation, and the importance of partnerships.

The Honourable Joseph Handley, House Leader and Minister of Finance for the Government of the Northwest Territories discussed the importance of maintaining good working relationships. On behalf of the Government of the Northwest Territories he said, "We are committed to working with Alberta."

The Honourable Pearl Calahasen, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, noted that her vision is to prepare a northern development strategy. "We need to face our challenges head on, focus on the opportunities and build strategies which will help us advance our cause." Dr. Michael Percy, Dean of the Faculty of Business at the University of Alberta, stressed the importance of documenting Northern Alberta's contribution to Alberta's and Canada's incremental growth to raise awareness in the decision-makers. He noted, "When you look at the economic growth in the Province today, it certainly is driven by what has been happening in Northern Alberta over the past two years."

Full details of the presentations are available in the Conference Proceedings. For your copy, please call Roxanne Heinen of the NADC at 780-624-6275.



Northern Priorities and Solutions Identified

The Conference helped to establish priorities and strategic directions to guide the future development of Northern Alberta.

Ten priority areas formed the basis of small discussion groups, of which delegates were asked to participate in two. In the discussion groups, delegates prioritized issues and developed solutions that could be promoted or implemented. More than 100 delegates participated in this process. The 10 priority areas were identified from issues raised by delegates at the Challenge NORTH 2000 Conference and at NADC Leaders' Roundtable Meetings.

The five top issues in order of importance and the solutions proposed for Northern Alberta by the delegates are listed below:

1. Transportation and Infrastructure

- ✓ Inform and lobby for a proactive northern transportation plan and a capital fund to develop northern roads;
- ✓ Develop a 'needs analysis' of the direct and indirect current and future economic contribution of Northern Alberta and the Northwest Territories;
- ✓ Perform a cost/benefit analysis of investment into northern roads; and;
- ✓ Create a rural road advisory task force.

2. Per capita funding formulas do not meet northern needs for Health and Social Services

- ✓ Identify the working transients (shadow population) and develop a method of data collection and communicate information to the public.

3. Lack of housing, services and recreational facilities in remote and high-growth communities hindering recruitment

- ✓ Implement regional cost sharing agreements to build and operate amenities, which includes all users – both private and public.

4. Accessibility of education and training for northerners

- ✓ Build a strong educational foundation.

5. Economic disparity, isolated communities working alone

- ✓ Regionalize services and communities.

Big Numbers, Big Contributions, Big Opportunities

Northern Alberta Contributions Study

Northern Alberta is a major engine of economic growth and development for both Alberta and Canada, but the impact of the region's economic contribution has never been fully documented and acknowledged. For this reason, the Northern Alberta Development Council (NADC) commissioned a study that clearly demonstrates the importance of the region to Alberta and Canada, now and in the future.

All Albertans need to be aware of Northern Alberta's impact on the economy. This study will increase the awareness of the region's contributions to the economy and encourage collaborative efforts that will ensure that this dynamic source of provincial wealth continues to flourish.

Big Numbers!

Northern Alberta contributed...

- ✓ \$3.8 billion, or 17% of total Alberta Government Revenue in the 2001-02 fiscal year
- ✓ 17% of Alberta Government personal and corporate income tax revenue and non-renewable resource revenue in 1999 and close to 29% in 2001.
- ✓ \$2.5 billion, or almost 13% of Alberta's total contribution to Federal Government revenues in the 2001-02 fiscal year.
- ✓ \$16 billion of Alberta's international commodity exports in 2002, one third of Alberta's total.
- ✓ \$5.3 billion, or 25% of Alberta's interprovincial exports in 2002.

Note that these figures are only the *direct* contributions made by Northern Alberta. The region's total contribution is much higher if the employment, value-added processing, and investment that takes place outside of the region as a result of the development of northern resources is taken into account.

Big Opportunities!

How does this affect me?

Investment in Northern Alberta creates a large demand for construction materials, labour, machinery and equipment within the region, the rest of Alberta, Canada and the world.

Every \$100 million invested in the region creates a demand for:

- ✓ \$64.1 million of construction materials and labour in Alberta.
- ✓ \$35 million of machinery and equipment—\$5.8 million in Alberta, \$2.9 million in the rest of Canada, and \$27 million outside Canada.

Investment in Northern Alberta for the period from 2004 to 2008, will create an annual demand for:

- ✓ \$8 billion of construction materials and labour.
- ✓ \$3 billion of machinery and equipment.

These figures highlight the dependency of other parts of Alberta on continued development of the oil sands and the opportunities to increase Alberta's share in the production of equipment.

Northern Development Ministers Forum 2003

The Honourable Pearl Calahasen, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, and Gary Friedel, Chair, Northern Alberta Development Council and the MLA for Peace River, recently attended the *Northern Development Ministers Forum—Conference 2003* in Iqaluit, Nunavut. Based on the reaction from those in attendance, the conference was very successful.

A number of topics were addressed including priority projects that were previously identified by the Northern Ministers. The Northern Awareness Enhancement Campaign, one of the priority projects, is being led by Alberta and coordinated by the Council. The first part of this project is aimed at increasing decision-makers' awareness of the important economic contribution that Canada's North makes to the economy. Other priority projects relate to transportation investment in the North, recruitment and retention of northern labour, and innovation and its application to northern regions of the country.

The 2004 Northern Development Ministers Forum will be held in Quebec and coordinated by the Government of Quebec.

NADC Updates and Activities

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NADC Member Receives Award

Pete Merlo, member of the Northern Alberta Development Council, received a *Canadian Chamber of Commerce Volunteer of the Year Award*, in acknowledgement of his volunteer efforts in both the Grande Prairie region and across Northern Alberta.

Mr. Merlo's efforts in the planning and development of Centre 2000 in Grande Prairie, is a testament to his leadership, relationship-building and fundraising skills. The NADC congratulates Pete on receiving this prestigious award and for his hard work on advancing Northern Alberta.

NCDC 2004 Annual Conference and General Meeting

The Northwest Corridor Development Corporation (NCDC) will hold its 2004 Conference and General Meeting in the Town of High Level from September 29th to October 1st, 2004. As noted by the Town's Mayor, Mike Mihaly, "This will be an excellent opportunity for us to showcase the High Level area while underlining the important connections between Northern Alberta and The Northwest Corridor." Further details regarding the Conference will be made public in the near future.

The Northwest Corridor Development Corporation promotes the use and development of The Northwest Corridor. Council member Mike Mihaly is a member of the Corporation's Board of Directors. The Northern Alberta Development Council acts as an advisor to the Corporation.

New Opportunity for Staff Member

The NADC wishes Colin Needham well as he assumes new responsibilities with Alberta Sustainable Resource Development. As a Resource Management Advisor, Colin will work with Aboriginal, industry and government stakeholders to develop policy related to resource management on provincial lands. Mr. Needham worked with the NADC as a Development Officer for almost 16 years.

New NADC Staff Member

Jennifer Bisley is a new Senior Northern Development Officer in the NADC Peace River office. Jennifer will assist with the planning and coordination of Council meetings, while working on northern development projects and other initiatives aimed at advancing Northern Alberta.

Opportunity Seminars 2004

The Northern Alberta Development Council has announced the location of its two Opportunity Seminars in 2004 — the Town of Grande Cache and the Town of High Level. While the date of the *Grande Cache Opportunity Seminar* is yet to be confirmed, the *High Level Opportunity Seminar* will be held on March 12, 2004.

The *High Level Opportunity Seminar* will focus on the impacts of development in the Northwest Territories on Northern Alberta. There is significant interest in this topic due to the natural resource developments occurring in the Northwest Territories, especially in regards to diamond mining and the proposed Mackenzie Valley Pipeline.

For information on the 2004 Opportunity Seminars, please do not hesitate to contact Brad Bishop or Jennifer Bisley of the Northern Alberta Development Council at 780-624-6274.



Season's Greetings

Best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all the members and staff at the Northern Alberta Development Council.



Here's How to Reach Us

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